

instant) of the resolutions relating to the ocean mail-services which were passed by the New Zealand Parliament.

It will be seen by these that in accordance with the understanding referred to in your letter of the 4th November, 1890, the Brindisi-Naples letter-rate has been reduced to 2½d. I have to add that my Government, in communicating this decision, intimate that it is assumed that it is fully understood by the Imperial Post Office that the Brindisi-Naples route is still to be restricted to specially-addressed correspondence, except, of course, as regards letters, &c., which it is now proposed to send once a month by that route alternately with that *via* San Francisco.

I beg leave to add that my Government express in a cablegram I have received this day a strong desire, which I venture to request you to convey to the Postmaster-General, that as speedy a reply as possible be given in respect to the proposals made in my letter of the 6th instant, to substitute the Federal mail-service *via* Suez for that by the Direct steamers.

In my letter of the 6th instant I adverted to the fact that the proposal of the Treasury as to the Atlantic sea transit, conveyed in your letter of the 17th ultimo, was unexpected and therefore unprovided for; and in reference to this I beg leave to state that my Government, in forwarding the resolutions herewith enclosed, explain that, in the absence of any information as to the intentions of the Imperial Government with respect to the renewal of the mail-services, they relied on the fact that the Imperial Government had hitherto recognised that the colony's isolated position made the existence of an independent postal communication with the Mother Country a necessity.

It was therefore considered by my Government, having meanwhile given intimation of their intentions, that there would not be any serious objection to a renewal for three years of the then existing arrangement, at least as regards the San Francisco service, which so far has been the quickest and most reliable mail-route between the United Kingdom and New Zealand; and the resolutions were therefore submitted to the New Zealand Parliament, with the condition that any such renewal would be contingent on the extension of the then existing apportionment.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office.

WALTER KENNAWAY.

Enclosure 2 in No. 158.

The ACTING AGENT-GENERAL to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,—

13, Victoria Street, London, S.W., 26th November, 1891.

In my letter to you of the 6th instant I stated, for the information of the Postmaster-General, that in the place of the Direct mail-service to New Zealand my Government proposed to avail themselves of the mail-service *via* Suez and Australia, so as to secure with that *via* San Francisco a fortnightly service between the two countries, and that they accordingly invited the Imperial Post Office to adopt the same course as regards the outward mails, it being understood on both sides that only specially-addressed letters would be sent by the intervening and other services.

Again, in my letter to you of the 17th instant, in announcing that my Government had, in accordance with the understanding with Her Majesty's Government, reduced the Brindisi-Naples letter-rate to 2½d, I intimated that it was assumed that the Brindisi-Naples route was still to be restricted to specially-addressed correspondence, except, of course, as regards letters, &c., which it was proposed to send once a month by that route alternately with that *via* San Francisco.

To the proposals to which my above-mentioned letters referred I have not as yet had any reply. But yesterday I received from your department a printed notice (in triplicate), without any covering letter, in which I find that the question of specially-addressed letters had apparently been decided in a way which is unfavourable to the expressed wishes of my Government.

My Government, I feel sure, regard the question of specially-addressed letters as one of material importance, and I am bound, therefore, to represent that they will naturally feel surprised at such an announcement having been made public before they themselves were made acquainted with it, and while, indeed, the question of substituting the Federal mail-service for the Direct was still the subject of negotiation with the Imperial Post Office.

I am free to admit that it was necessary that a notice should be issued as to the continuation of the San Francisco service, and also that the mails which had hitherto gone by the Direct steamers would be sent *via* Suez; but I venture to submit that the same necessity did not exist for announcing that the system of specially-addressed letters would be abolished.

Under these circumstances I beg permission to express a hope that the Postmaster-General will be pleased to take such steps as he may deem expedient in order to afford my Government an opportunity of again considering the question of specially-addressed letters, &c., between the two countries when they have received a reply to the proposal as submitted in my letters of the 6th and 17th instant.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office.

WALTER KENNAWAY.

Enclosure 3 in No. 158.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, to the ACTING AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, E.C., 27th November, 1891.

In reply to your letter of the 26th instant, I beg leave to inform you that, on the receipt of your letters dated the 6th and 17th instant, the Postmaster-General lost no time in bringing under the consideration of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury the views expressed by you, on behalf of the Government of New Zealand, with reference to the contribution to be made from the Imperial revenue towards the expense of the mail-service which the colony still proposes to maintain between San Francisco and New Zealand.